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# **Southwest Airlines Announces \$100,000 Donation to National Wildlife Refuge Association**

**Southwest Airlines' EarlyBird Check-In™ Giving Program helped us help them**

DALLAS, Oct. 18 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Today, Southwest Airlines announced that the airline reached its goal of donating \$100,000 to the National Wildlife Refuge Association (NWRA) as a result of its "Help Us Help Them" giving program in which Southwest donated \$1 for every EarlyBird Check-In™ purchased from Sept. 21, 2010 through Oct. 4, 2010. With the donation from Southwest Airlines, the National Wildlife Refuge Association will:

- Work to permanently protect important wildlife habitat for Gulf Coast species like brown pelicans, seabirds, and sea turtles through land acquisition and conservation easements. This includes important beaches for nesting sea turtles, seabird nesting areas, and warm water springs for West Indian manatees;
- Support habitat restoration work that will clean up soiled habitat and restore marshlands, beaches and uplands that are important for migratory birds, marine mammals and a spectrum of shellfish that are not just important for wildlife, but which serve as an engine of the Gulf Coast economy;
- Build grassroots efforts to continue Gulf Coast recovery efforts over the long term by strengthening volunteer organizations and encouraging volunteer clean-up activities. This includes planting dune grass, cleaning up oil residue and damage, monitoring species recovery, and helping volunteers take action with their local and national representatives to keep fighting for the Gulf;
- Advocate with decision-makers for increases in funding to restore the Gulf and provide needed support for our national wildlife refuges, cornerstones of wildlife conservation in America and premier destinations for people to enjoy wildlife.

"This generous contribution by Southwest Airlines and its many loyal customers will make a difference for the incredible variety of wildlife that call the Gulf home," said Evan Hirsche, President of the NWRA. "Pelicans, sea turtles, manatees and a great many other species impacted by the oil spill stand to benefit from Southwest's commitment."

As the Official Airline of the NWRA, Southwest is proud to support the Association's goal of conserving America's wildlife heritage for future generations. To view photos of wildlife efforts and read a blog post, visit [www.blogsouthwest.com](http://www.blogsouthwest.com).

"We are honored and privileged to support the work of the NWRA, and we couldn't think of a better way to contribute to their efforts in the Gulf and around their refuge system than by donating time and funds," said Linda Rutherford, Southwest Airlines Vice President of

Communication and Strategic Outreach. "We thank our Employees for giving their time to volunteer at refuges, and we thank our Customers for the wonderful response to our EarlyBird Check-In program during this giving period, which made the donation possible."

The National Wildlife Refuge Association is committed to building strategic relationships that further its goal to strengthen the ecological integrity of our national wildlife refuges and thus ensure a diverse spectrum of plants and wildlife well into the future.

EarlyBird Check-In is a low-cost option (just \$10 each way) that gives Southwest Airlines Customers the convenience of automatic flight checkin. EarlyBird Check-In Customers have a better opportunity to select a preferred seat and have greater access to overhead bin storage for carryon luggage than the general boarding Customers. The partnership with the NWRA also commemorates the program's one-year anniversary.

For more information about the EarlyBird Check-In giving program, visit [www.southwest.com](http://www.southwest.com). To learn more about the National Wildlife Refuge Association, visit [www.refugeassociation.org](http://www.refugeassociation.org).

### **About Southwest Airlines**

After 39 years of service, Southwest Airlines continues to differentiate itself from other low-fare carriers--offering a reliable product with exemplary Customer Service. Southwest Airlines is the nation's largest carrier in terms of originating domestic passengers boarded and now serves 69 cities in 35 states. Southwest also is one of the most honored airlines in the world, known for its commitment to the triple bottom line of Performance, People, and Planet. To read more about how Southwest is doing its part to be a good citizen, visit [southwest.com/cares](http://southwest.com/cares) to read the Southwest Airlines One Report™. Based in Dallas, Southwest currently operates more than 3,200 flights a day and has nearly 35,000 Employees systemwide.

### **About the National Wildlife Refuge Association**

The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge Association is to conserve America's wildlife heritage for future generations through strategic programs that protect, enhance, and expand the National Wildlife Refuge System and the landscapes beyond its boundaries that secure its ecological integrity. NWRA works across the U.S. to conserve the most biologically sensitive landscapes, enlisting the support of local citizens and diverse state and federal partners. In addition, NWRA provides training and guidance to more than 250 local refuge "Friends" volunteer groups that are vital to creating public support for national wildlife refuges and wildlife conservation.

SOURCE Southwest Airlines